



## Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

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### **Mercer, Mineral middle schools to present mock trials at Supreme Court**

**For immediate release Thursday, April 22, 2010**

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** – Students from two schools will perform mock trial scripts they wrote as part of *West Virginia Law Adventure*, the Supreme Court's civic education program for middle school students, during the finale of this year's project, on Thursday, April 29, 2010, in the Supreme Court Chamber.

One Supreme Court Justice will sit as the presiding trial judge in each case. Students will perform according to the following schedule:

10:30 a.m. Bluefield Middle School, Mercer County, Justice Thomas McHugh presiding.

1:30 p.m. Keyser Primary-Middle School, Mineral County, Justice Margaret Workman presiding.

Unlike other mock trial programs in which students perform cases using scripts or materials prepared by adults, *West Virginia Law Adventure* requires each participating group to write its own script based on one of three criminal case scenarios. Each of the winning groups of students chose to write a script based on a murder case.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Robin Jean Davis said, "I enjoyed listening to a Kanawha County class act out its script last year. The Court has designed this program in a way that we hope gives students a unique insight into the Court system, and makes them think about the law and courts in a positive way.

"The real court system is not like it is often portrayed on television. West Virginia judges are not like Judge Judy, and real cases are not as black and white as they are on 'Law and Order.' My fellow justices and I hope that by making students think through the arguments of the prosecution and defense in one mock case they will come away with a genuine understanding and appreciation of the American justice system and our Constitutional protections," Chief Justice Davis said.

The West Virginia State Bar helped write the rules for the program. The West Virginia Bar Foundation granted funds for travel costs associated with *West Virginia Law Adventure*.

(MORE)

After a two-year pilot project, students in schools across the state were invited to participate this school year. Keyser Primary-Middle School won in the eighth-grade category and Bluefield Middle School won in the mixed-age category.

Other schools that participated this year were: Belington Middle School, Barbour County, eighth grade category; Nuttall Middle School, Fayette County, eighth grade category; Western Greenbrier Middle School, two eighth-grade classes; Moorefield Middle School, Hardy County, mixed age category; Horace Mann Middle School, Kanawha County, mixed age category; Stonewall Jackson Middle School, Kanawha County, eighth grade category; Princeton Middle School, Mercer County, mixed age category; Ritchie County Middle School, eighth grade category.

Schools interested in participating next year should contact Supreme Court Public Education Coordinator Kandi Greter at (304) 340-2755 or [kandi.greter@courtswv.gov](mailto:kandi.greter@courtswv.gov).

*West Virginia Law Adventure* is adapted with permission from the New Jersey State Bar Foundation's original, award-winning *Law Adventure Competition and Programs* for grades seven and eight. For more information about the New Jersey State Bar Foundation, visit [www.njsbf.org](http://www.njsbf.org).

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